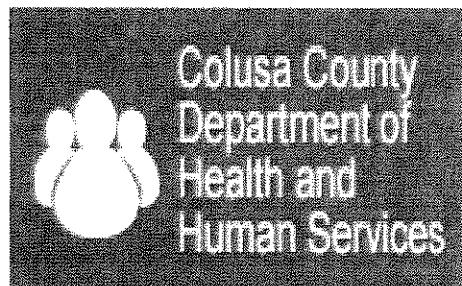
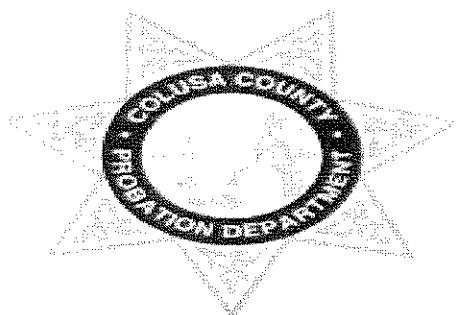


Colusa County System Improvement Plan Update 2013



Submitted: May 1, 2013

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California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan Update 2013

County:	Colusa
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency:	Colusa County Department of Health and Human Services
Period of Plan:	May 2, 2011-May 1, 2013
Period of Outcomes Data:	Q2 2011 through Q3 2012
Date Submitted:	April 24, 2013

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Signature:	

Submitted by:	County Chief Probation Officer (Interim)
Name:	William Fenton
Signature:	

Colusa County SIP Update 2013

Summary Narrative

This is the second update of the current System Improvement Plan (SIP) for Colusa County. The current plan was approved by the Colusa County Board of Supervisors and is for the period of May 2010 through May 2013. The original report was submitted to the California Department of Social Services in September 2010.

Stakeholder Participation

The collaborative relationships in Colusa County that were identified in the SIP continue to exist. Small counties, such as Colusa, are able to maximize minimal resources due to the collaboration and partnerships necessary to support one another. Colusa County Probation Department and Colusa County Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) have a close working relationship with each other. The two departments worked together with California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the Outcomes and Accountability Bureau (CSOAB), to complete this SIP Update.

Outcomes Measures, Goals, Strategies, and Action Steps

Data Source: The outcomes analysis for Child Welfare Services (CWS) is addressed in each individual SIP matrix utilizing the UC Berkeley Center for Social Services Research (CSSR) data. Safe Measures reports from Children's Research Center (CRC) were reviewed from the report period of May 2011 through September 2012 to drill down the data for a more in-depth analysis and to assist in the development of future strategies for improvement.

Colusa County Child Welfare experienced significant staffing issues during the May 2011-May 2012 time period. At one point the child welfare unit went from six staff members down to two permanent full time employees and one extra help social worker. Essential management/supervisory staff were on extended leaves which created major workload issues and impeded program compliance. When reviewing the data for the three outcome/systemic factors, you will see a dip in performance which has since recovered.

Safety Indicator, 2B, 10 Day Timely Response for referrals data shows that child welfare fell to a low of 78.8% compliance for the third quarter of calendar year 2011. Since that time performance has increased reaching 100% compliance for the second quarter of calendar year 2012, 92.9% for the third quarter and 100% for the fourth quarter of calendar year 2012. Our continued goal will be to maintain the standard goal of 95% or better compliance for this measure.

Permanency Composite 3, measure C3.1, exits to permanency for children data shows that Colusa County has met or exceeded the standard goal for this outcome measure in all but one quarter (Q3 2011) since the fourth quarter of 2010. Our goal will be to continue to meet or exceed the standard goal for this outcome. Additional strategies we have identified for this measure are implementation of emancipation

conferences; continued development of our Safety Organized Practice program; Father Involvement Activities development and utilization of our new family finding services.

Permanency Composite 4, measure C4.3, the percentage of children in foster care for at least 24 months that had two or fewer placement settings data for Colusa County shows an interesting trend. Colusa County performance for the Composite score, measure C4.1, and measure C4.2 of this permanency outcome was just at or exceeded the standard goal. However, for measure C4.3, youth in placement at least 24 months, our performance is well below the standard goal. (Please refer to the table for these measures located on page 13 of this report.)

Data reports for six quarters show an average of 12.3 youth in the data set with an average of 1.5 with two or fewer placements. A more extensive look into the youth that are represented in this data set is needed to identify any common traits that will be used in the development of additional strategies to improve performance.

Several new practices have been initiated in Colusa County over the reporting period that may help with this measure. Such practices include family finding services and Safety Organized Practices that will help identify resource families and/or preserve current placements prior to reaching the 24 month mark.

The most recent data for measure C4.3 for the fourth quarter of 2012, looking at all children in foster care during the 12 month period between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2012 shows 5 youth in the data set with 2 youth having two or fewer placements. This performance meets the standard goal. The reason behind this drop in youth that meet the criteria since the last report for this measure is that 4 youth saw their adoptions finalized, 2 reached the age of majority, and 1 was placed in a legal guardianship. Of the 3 youth for quarter 4 of 2012, with 3 or more placements they are all age 14 or older; 2 of the youth have significant mental health issues and 1 has a pending adoption.

Probation analysis of their data continues to become stronger as they become more familiar with the use of CWS/CMS. They continue striving to reach full utilization of the CWS/CMS system. Recent changes to workload assignments and staff structure have increased the juvenile probation worker staffing from two to four officers. This structure change includes the addition of one supervision probation officer position and the addition of one juvenile probation officer. SBC tokens have been obtained for these new staff members and training is pending officer availability.

Probation has made progress with their SIP goals and strategies. It is noteworthy that their caseload has dropped from 120 youth five years ago to currently 32 wards of the juvenile court. The caseload continues to decline with only five youth in placement at this time. Wraparound Services with the "step down" services have been credited at least in part, for the improvement. Other programs and practices that have supported SIP improvement are:

- Boys Council and Girls Circle –early intervention programs in school
- Aggression Replacement Therapy (ART) Services-10 week program.

CWS/Probation Matrix

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Safety Indicator 2	2B-(10 Day) Response of all referrals requiring a response within 10 days what percentage was within 10 days?		
County's Current Performance:	Colusa County's performance for Q2 2012 was 100% and for Q1 2012 it was 87.5%. The state performance is 95%.		
Improvement Goal 1.0	The goal is to improve to 95%, the State performance, and maintain the goal over time.		
Strategy 1. 1	CAPIT CBCAP PSSF N/A	Strategy Rationale	
Social workers and Supervisor will use Safe Measures to manage and monitor 10 day response times for referrals.		CWS staff will be able to better track time frames and due dates by using Safe Measures. Specific reports are available to determine referral assignment dates, response dates and status of referral.	
1.1.1 Social workers will monitor their referral caseload in Safe Measures twice a week.		This has been initiated and will continue throughout the duration of the SIP plan.	Social Workers
1.1.2 Supervisor will monitor the social workers' referrals on Safe Measures twice a week to ensure compliance time. Referral staffings will be conducted by the supervisor with each social worker a minimum of twice-weekly utilizing the Safe Measures reports to determine which referrals still need a timely response.		This has been initiated and will continue.	Supervisor
1.1.3 Program Manager will monitor Safe Measures at least weekly to ensure compliance of referral response time.		This has been initiated and will continue.	Program Manager

- Family Team Meetings-less formal than Wraparound meetings.
- Family Finding
- PACT-assessment tool for youth. Youth and parents all sign the case plan as part of assessment process.

Strategy 1. 2

	CAPIT	CBCAP	PSSF	N/A	Strategy Rationale
Social Workers will utilize Structured Decision Making (SDM) tools to determine response priority.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Structured Decision Making tools assist the social worker with making good decisions about response time for referrals.
1.2.1 Social workers with Intake responsibilities will use SDM tools to determine response priority with each referral.					This has been initiated and will continue throughout the duration of the SIP plan.
1.2.2 Supervisor will monitor SDM tools to confirm correct response type has been selected by the social worker for each referral.					This has been initiated and will continue.
1.2.3 Program Manager will monitor compliance through weekly meetings with supervisor and SDM.					This has been initiated and will continue.
					Assigned to Social Workers Supervisor Program Manager

UPDATE 2013

It is important to note that the percentages reported are in regard to 10-day response times only. During the five quarters included in the report period, social workers missed only one immediate response referral out of twenty-four referrals received. As is seen with all Colusa County data, our data set size is so small that our percentages are greatly affected if even one referral or case fails to meet targeted goals. Typically, Colusa County performs well in this area as it is a priority. This safety measure is dependant upon staff capacity to meet the need. As discussed in the narrative, during the reporting period, Colusa County had significant staffing issues in that 50% of the social services full time employees were out on various types of leave and two others resigned from their positions. As of May 2012, those individuals on leave had returned and by the next month, the social services unit was fully staffed with permanent full time employees. It is anticipated that this measure will be met and maintained during the next and future reporting periods. Data for Q2 2012 showed 100% performance for immediate response referrals and 92.9% performance for 10-day response times.

Colusa County will continue to utilize Strategies 1.1 and 1.2.

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Permanency Composite 3 (Long Term Care)

C3.1 Exits to permanency (24 months in care) Of all children in foster care for 24 months or longer on the first day of the year, what percent were discharged to a permanent home by the end of the year and prior to turning 18?

County's Current Performance:

Colusa County's performance for Q2 2012 was 33.3% and for Q1 2012 it was 36.4%. The federal standard is equal to or greater than 29.1%.

Improvement Goal 2.0

Colusa County has successfully reached the federal standard for this measure well within the three year plan as set with the 2010-2013 SIP. Our improvement goal will now be to maintain our performance in this area.

Milestone	Strategy 2.1	Strategy 2.2	Strategy 2.3	Strategy Rationale
2.1.1 A model for Emancipation Conferences will be determined.	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emancipation Conferences are effective in assisting the youth in transition planning, educational goal setting, housing considerations, identifying support systems, etc. Emancipation conferences are integral in the creation of TILPs and various AB 12 requirements.
2.1.2 Policies and procedures will be developed for the Emancipation Conferences.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	By December 31, 2013. By January 31, 2014
2.1.3 Training will be provided to CWS and Probation staff for the Emancipation Conferences.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training by March 31, 2014 with implementation targeted for April 30, 2014
Timeframe		Assigned to		
2.1.1 A model for Emancipation Conferences will be determined.		Program Manager and CWS Supervisor		Program Manager and Probation Chief or designee
2.1.2 Policies and procedures will be developed for the Emancipation Conferences.		Program Manager and Probation Chief or designee		CWS Supervisor and Probation Chief or designee
2.1.3 Training will be provided to CWS and Probation staff for the Emancipation Conferences.				

Strategy 2. 2			
Milestone	Strategy Rationale	Timeline	Assigned To
Implement Safety Organized Practice (SOP) to expedite permanency for children and youth.	<p><input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p>SOP is client-centered and strength-based bringing family to the decision-making table. Safety Organized Practice/Signs of Safety is a promising practice used together with Structured Decision Making for the best of critical thinking (SofS) and research based analytical thinking (SDM) for child welfare decisions. Signs of Safety promotes family engagement from intake through case closure.</p>	<p>2.2.1 Determine the FGM model to be used and develop protocol for staff.</p> <p>2.2.2 Train CWS staff and service providers on SOP model and how to incorporate with Participatory Case Planning.</p> <p>2.2.3 Train CWS staff on proper documentation of SOP and family engagement efforts in CWS/CMS.</p>	<p>COMPLETED</p> <p>Initial trainings completed and training is on-going.</p> <p>Initial trainings completed and training is on-going.</p>
Strategy 2. 3	<p><input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A</p> <p>Implement Family Finding activities for child welfare and probation cases.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale</p> <p>Children reach permanency sooner when Family Finding efforts are made to locate family and other significant people in the child's life at the onset of removal for purposes of placement and support. Making "lifelong connections" for youth exiting foster care or turning 18 increases successful transitions to adulthood.</p>	

<p>Milestone</p> <p>2.3.1 Explore other Family Finding strategies used by other counties.</p>	<p>Timeline</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>	<p>Assigned to</p>								
<p>Milestone</p> <p>2.3.2 Implement a Family Finding protocol for both CWS and Probation.</p>	<p>Timeline</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>	<p>Assigned to</p>								
<p>Milestone</p> <p>2.3.3 Contract with a “people locator” website such as US Search, to facilitate searches.</p>	<p>Timeline</p> <p>COMPLETED</p>	<p>Assigned to</p>								
<p>Milestone</p> <p>2.3.4 Monitor use of contracted service and analyze effectiveness.</p>	<p>Timeline</p> <p>December 31, 2013</p>	<p>Assigned to</p> <p>Program Manager</p>								
<p>Strategy 2.4</p> <p>Implement formal Father Involvement activities in CWS and Probation cases.</p>	<p>Strategy Rationale</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT</th> <th><input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP</th> <th><input type="checkbox"/> PSSF</th> <th><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>The role of the father in CWS cases has been underestimated and efforts to locate the father are often minimal due to time constraints. Involving fathers in the child/youth's life provides opportunities for additional support, placement possibilities, and the parental connection all children need.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A				The role of the father in CWS cases has been underestimated and efforts to locate the father are often minimal due to time constraints. Involving fathers in the child/youth's life provides opportunities for additional support, placement possibilities, and the parental connection all children need.	<p>Timeline</p> <p>As training is available.</p> <p>Milestone</p> <p>2.4.1 Father Involvement training has occurred for some CWS staff and more training is needed for the remainder of CWS and Probation staff.</p> <p>May 31, 2014</p> <p>Milestone</p> <p>2.4.2 Develop Father Involvement protocols for CWS and Probation.</p> <p>July 31, 2014</p> <p>Milestone</p> <p>2.4.3 Implement Father Involvement protocols for social workers and probation officers.</p> <p>Program Manager and Probation Chief</p> <p>Program Manager and Probation Chief or designee</p> <p>Program Manager and Probation Chief or designee</p> <p>Program Manager and Probation Chief</p>
<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT	<input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP	<input type="checkbox"/> PSSF	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A							
			The role of the father in CWS cases has been underestimated and efforts to locate the father are often minimal due to time constraints. Involving fathers in the child/youth's life provides opportunities for additional support, placement possibilities, and the parental connection all children need.							

Strategy 2. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	Strategy Rationale
Milestone	Timeline	Assigned To
Formalize Concurrent Planning policies and procedures on all CWS cases.	Meetings are already occurring.	Supervisor and State Adoptions Representative
2.5.1 Continue monthly set meetings with CWS and State Adoptions representative.		

UPDATE 2013

Colusa County has successfully met the federal standard for this outcome measure in all but one quarter since the last quarter of 2010. The strategies and milestones outlined above have been updated to reflect our progress and targeted timeframes of those practices not yet implemented. Here is a summary of those changes:

- Emancipation Conferences (Strategy 2.1): This strategy has not yet been formalized and a new timeframe has been established. AB 12 requirements will be included in this strategy.
- Family Group Meetings (Strategy 2.2): Colusa County has recently implemented the Safety Organized Practice model. Social workers have attended trainings and we are working with UC Davis to establish an implementation plan. Colusa County has contracted with a facilitator to run the meetings.
- Family Finding Activities (Strategy 2.3): Colusa County recently contracted with Seneca Family Services for family finding services. As this is a new service, analysis of this activity is not possible.
- Father Involvement Activities (Strategy 2.4): This strategy has not yet been formalized and a new timeframe has been established.
- Concurrent Planning (Strategy 2.5): No change to this strategy except to update the timeframe.

Outcome/Systemic Factor: Permanency Composite 4 (Placement Stability)

Measure C4.3 Of all children served in foster care during the year who were in foster care for at least 24 months, what percent had two or fewer placement settings?

County's Current Performance:

Colusa County's performance for Q2 2012 was 0% and for Q1 2012 it was 7.7%. The federal standard is equal to or greater than 41.8%.

Improvement Goal 3.0

The improvement target goal is to improve by 10% total over three years with incremental improvements of 3.3% for each of the first two years and 3.4% the third and final year for a total of 10%. This improvement would bring the county performance to the federal standard. This goal has not been met.

Milestone	Strategy	Strategy Rationale	Assigned to
	<input type="checkbox"/> CAPIT <input type="checkbox"/> CBCAP <input type="checkbox"/> PSSF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	Children are further traumatized by disrupted placements and multiple moves. Transitions are often not done well in either CWS or Probation. Relative placements are 70% more stable according to one study. Trained and supported foster parents, including kin, have more reasonable expectations and more skills. Children experience less trauma upon removal from the home if they are able to remain in their own school, neighborhood, and nearby family to increase and expedite reunification efforts. Social workers and probation officers spend less time driving to out-of-county placements.	CAPC Executive Director with oversight by Program Manager
3.1.1 Recruit one foster family home through targeted advertising and other outreach efforts.		On-going year around recruitment activity.	9
3.1.2 Offer support activities for foster families, relatives/NREFM's and potential foster families.		On-going efforts	CAPC Executive Director with oversight by Program Manager

UPDATE 2013

The CAPC Executive Director has made substantial efforts in 2011-2012 to recruit local homes. CAPC acts as a referral and information source for those interested in fostering. The other strategies listed in the SIP were also completed without success that can be evidenced in the outcome measures.

Analysis of the data showed an interesting trend.

Measure	Goal	Q3 2012	Q2 2012	Q1 2012	Q4 2011	Q3 2011	Q2 2011
C4- Placement Stability Composite	101.5	97.3	99.1	101.5	101.4	108.2	95.2
C4.1- Placement Stability (8 days to 12 months in care)	86	90.9	89.5	88.9	94.4	94.1	96.2
C4.2- Placement Stability (12 to 24 months in care)	65.4	77.8	92.3	91.7	81.8	90	50
C4.3- Placement Stability (At least 24 months in care)	41.8	9.1	0	7.7	8.3	16.7	25

When looking at measure C4, Placement Stability Composite, Colusa County has consistently been right on target with the standard goal of 101.5. This is true for measures C4.1 and C4.2. It appears that the county struggles with placement stability when the youth has been in placement for at least 24 months (measure C4.3). The primary assumption regarding this measure is that these are more complex cases and the youth in this population have extraordinary needs that negatively affect placement success. A much more detailed analysis of the specific cases involved is needed to identify possible interventions and strategies.

UPDATE 2013

Describe any additional systemic factors needing to be addressed that support the improvement plan goals.

It is a goal of Colusa County to increase the number of foster families and relative/NREFM placements for both CWS and Probation. Out of county placements are more costly and often not in the best interest of the child or youth, but necessary due to the lack of available homes in the county. Colusa County DHHS does not license county foster homes. The foster parents and relative/NREFM's located in the county need continuous support from the agencies for the challenges they face of minimal resources, as well as the behavioral/emotional and educational needs of the children in their homes. Training and leadership opportunities will offer caretakers the skills necessary to provide for the needs of the children placed in their homes. Colusa County CAPC provides recruitment activities and serves as a resource for community members interested in fostering. This collaboration will continue with CAPC to support the recruitment and retention of foster families and relative/NREFM homes.

In addition to looking at the quantity and quality of available foster families within Colusa County, we need to look at the youth that are difficult to place and/or stabilize in a foster care setting. Are their similarities? Are additional strategies needed to adequately address the issue?

UPDATE 2013

Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.

Training needs have been identified throughout the SIP Update for 2013. The Northern California Training Academy (UC Davis) provides the majority of training to CWS throughout the year. CWS and Probation staff are committed to best practices and evidence-based approaches in working with children and families. Policy and technical assistance is needed as new laws/appellate cases are enacted.

Probation staff continues to need training for CWS/CMS data entry due to staffing changes and to reinforce current entry procedures. The Northern California Training Academy provides training in the Orland Training lab and on-site training for Probation and Child Welfare staff. The NYTD database and CWS/CMS Aftercare cases will also require technical assistance for both departments. The statewide effort fits well with the desired permanency outcomes for both CWS and Probation.

Technical assistance and training will need to continue from CDSS for the implementation of AB 12 for non-minor dependents and Katie A. Due to the complexity and incremental implementation steps of this legislation, support and training will continue to be needed for both CWS and Probation.

Signs of Safety has been identified as a promising practice with a family engagement approach in working with CWS families. The County receives support from the Northern California Training Academy to implement Safety Organized Practice (SOP). Colusa County has contracted with an individual to provide facilitation for SOP processes so that implementation remains on target.

UPDATE 2013 Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals.

CDSS has offered technical assistance to CWS in improving the working relationship with State Adoptions. In meeting the goal of timely adoptions it is essential that the two agencies collaborate effectively.

Colusa County continues to contract with CDSS for Adoption services. Currently our assigned adoptions consultant meets with child welfare staff monthly to ensure communication between our two agencies in an effort to alleviate barriers to timely adoptions for youth.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals.

Flexible funding is needed for both CWS and Probation programs. The categorical funding streams and funding limitations inhibit the ability to direct dollars in ways that could be most beneficial in working with child welfare families.

